

STARVED FOR HER HANDWRITING

Mama, when I
saw your comedy
and tragedy
plaques carried
away from the
garage sale in
stranger's fingers,
your peach and
black silks, even
satin underwear
in the costume
manager's hands
it was as if pieces
of you were being
carried off, like
parts of a body
in velvet. I wanted
to get it down,
photograph what was
dissolving. But I
was packing my own
past off, leaving
bundles at curbside
as footsteps were
sanded from floors
and I was throwing
out cancelled
checks, it seemed
so much was void,
had holes in it

GARAGE SALE: 1

Old photos
falling out
of a trunk
of when the
family was
happy, auto-
graph books
and diaries,
it's as if
you were
breaking
and enter-
ing

GARAGE SALE: 2

Fingers like claws
grab the Ronson
cigarette holder,
the comedy and
tragedy plaques —
the dealers, like
muggers, break thru
past the 9 AM
start sign at 6
AM buzzards,
vultures swooping
down to clutch
games we used to
pull out of the
storeroom closet,
spread on the grey
spiral rug or under
the carmel glass
over the dining
room table, carried
off like prey.
Someone steals a
boxed silver star.
Gone are the old
crazed chipped pots
beans and barley
soup was baked in,
the blue violin
vase there never
were flowers in
that stood on the
white bookcase
where my mother
waited for my car,
my Maverick, my
Mustang, my T-Bird,
refrigerator dishes
from the '50s with
red boats painted
on white, things so
ordinary, like her
voice on my answer-
ing machine when I
was longing for some
man, not her, to call
me that sting